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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EUR/WE, EB/TRA
DHS FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
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SUBJECT: FRANCE: CHARLES DE GAULLE AND WASHINGTON-DULLES AIRPORTS
DISCUSS NEW COOPERATION ON SECURITY

1. (SBU) Post wishes to highlight an innovative proposed "sister-airport" link between Paris' Charles de Gaulle (CDG) airport and Washington-Dulles airport. The idea -- for a limited information and "best practices" exchange -- was originally formulated in November 2005 by Dulles security officials during a visit to the airport by a French delegation from the French Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC). A two-member delegation from Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG) followed up with a visit to Dulles in May 2006 designed to familiarize them with its operations, allow them to discuss French procedures, and further discuss the possibilities of improving information exchange and "best practices," particularly in the domain of airport and passenger security, to potentially include issues such as procedures, technology, training, and administration.

2. (SBU) Post has been discussing this concept with airport and security officials responsible for CDG since January 2006, and it has met with a uniformly positive response. Post also finds much to applaud in the idea. Given our aviation security agenda and the difficulties we at times experience in ensuring GOF cooperation, we need to take the lead in promoting our willingness to exchange ideas and establish cooperation on security in a variety of fora. Moreover, a local initiative such as this could improve US-French cooperation without the bureaucratic obstacles on the French side that have limited the flow of information via the mandatory inspection process. It should give the Embassy a better understanding of French security practices, and might provide us with allies that could be useful in overcoming GOF roadblocks that have restricted US access to French airports to the bare minimum.

3. (SBU) Post strongly recommends that the Department, DHS and TSA help facilitate this proposal. We encourage Washington agencies to contact Donald MacGregor Ross Deputy Federal Security Director, Washington Dulles International Airport to discuss the idea: (703) 662-2264 (desk), (202) 365-5986 (cell), don.ross@dhs.gov.

Stapleton